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PUNCH

AUGUST
22
1951

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No. 5782

PUNCH OFFICE
10 BOUVERIE STREET LONDON E.C.4



"BARNEYS has given me the satisfaction and pleasure I had almost decided I would never again be able to find"

Many smokers, like this Barneys enthusiast from Burnley, have "teamed-up" with their favourite after patient trial of various brands. (One can almost hear the comment "That's exactly what happened to me.")

Burnley, Lancs.

Dear Sirs,
Before the War I was a regular pipe smoker, and during the War, more for convenience than anything else, I changed to cigarettes, but as shortages became more acute decided to return to the pipe. Naturally I started with the tobacco I used to smoke. But something had gone wrong.

I tried other makes, but always I was disappointed. I almost gave up in despair, but couldn't face up to having to queue for cigarettes. Then I bought a 2 oz. tin of Barneys.

The fragrance and freshness when I opened the sealed tin gave me new hope. After the first pipeful I felt my search was at an end. That was six months ago. Since then Barneys has given me the satisfaction and pleasure that I had almost decided I would never again be able to find.

Yours thankfully for a good smoke,

* Pipe Tobaccos vary. No two Brands are alike. Barneys is the friendly smoke which pipemen themselves have been recommending to other Smokers for close on 40 years.
Barneys (medium). Punchbowle (full) Parsons Pleasure (mild). Home Prices 4/5 the oz. each.

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JACOB'S

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An Austin Reed suit

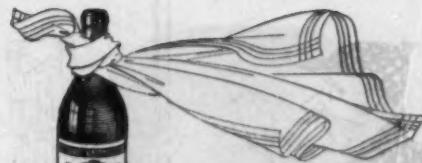
*that's cool
and comfortable*

In an Austin Reed suit you will feel cool and look faultless. And a hard-working life will merely reveal its hard-wearing qualities. Prices from £14. 17. 6.

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...between Lillet and a knotted handkerchief? Just that the **simplest** and **best cocktail*** is also the most easily remembered. So don't hesitate, order —

GIN AND **LILLET**

* Two thirds gin and one third LILLET.
For added piquancy try a dash of Anisette
(Mario Brizard).
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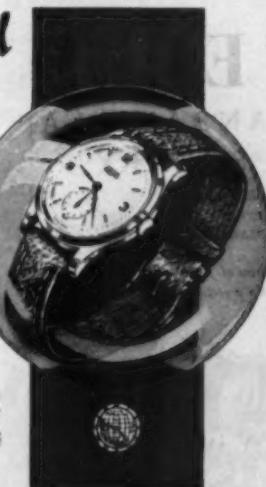
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**CYMA
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owes its successful protection against DUST and DIRT to the perfect construction of its specially built case.



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WORLD'S FINEST WATCH FOR ALL CLIMATES AND ROUGH WEAR

Punch, August 22 1951



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GLOUCESTER SHIRT CO. LTD. GLOUCESTER ENG

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VERY FINE NATURAL
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FOR MEN WHO FIND
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Cooper's
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Made in Great Britain exclusively by
LYLE & SCOTT LTD. OF HAWICK, SCOTLAND, and IDEAL HOUSE, ARGYLL STREET, LONDON, W.1

quiet, perfect grooming

Good grooming goes hand-in-hand
with comfort. Lenthéric after shave
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In handy-grip flacon 8/4.
And Travel Size 5/-.

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Size After Shave Lotion
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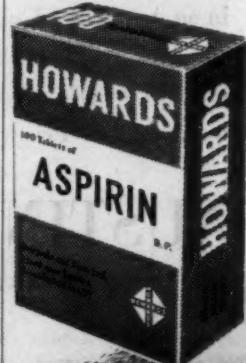


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You DON'T have to wind a Rolex Perpetual; the natural movement of your wrist keeps it going. But wait! There's more in that than meets the eye. The Perpetual wasn't perfected just to save you the trouble of winding your watch up. In their ceaseless search for greater and greater accuracy, the Rolex scientists found that a self-winding watch is far more accurate than an ordinary watch

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Combine this even tension with the exquisite care that goes into the making of all Rolex watches; consider that the delicate Rolex movement is perfectly protected by that amazing Oyster case; and then ask yourself if there's any watch that could serve you half so well or half so surely.



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WHAT SHALL WE DO TODAY? What shall we *not* do, for at sea with Cunard there is so much to choose from. A boat-deck stroll to enjoy the Atlantic breezes, a visit to the shops or hairdresser, cocktails before lunch, a rest in the magnificent lounges or at the cinema, superb meals with dancing in the evening . . .

Each glorious day finishes with you anxiously counting off the hours against the things you have not yet seen—the sports deck, the library, a concert . . . "Is this a dream, this floating luxury city?" you ask yourself nightly, as you sink drowsily into pillow comfort. But it is no dream, it is reality, yet escape from reality—

and it awaits you now.

Cunard

IS YOUR WAY ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

For full information apply: Pier Head, Liverpool; (Cunard 9221); 15 Lower Regent St., London, S.W.1 (Whitbread 7890); 11 Leadenhall St., London, E.C.3 (Avenue 3010), or the principal travel agencies.



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In other words, did you spend the night on a "RELYON"? To replace the energy expended during the day, you need to relax completely at night, and the following

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Spring-filled
MATTRESSES *The best in the world—*
and DIVANS
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to get your
lavatory
deep-cleaned

THE DAILY STAY-BRIGHT WAY

5 seconds is all the time it takes you to get your lavatory cleaner, safer, than ever before. No hard scrubbing is needed—just sprinkle Harpic in lavatory pans and leave it to do all the work. It does what no brush could do—reaches right round the S-bend. Remember, Harpic is the product that cleans, deodorizes and disinfects all at once. It's no wonder that 5 out of 10 homes use it.

Buy a tin of Harpic at your nearest shop today—and be sure of a shining, clean, sanitary lavatory.

NOW! PERFUMED AND NON-PERFUMED

Two kinds of Harpic are now in the shops—the familiar kind and a new one with an added fresh fragrance.

HARPIC THE HALLMARK OF HYGIENE
IN 5 OUT OF 10 HOMES

Reckitt & Sons, Hull and London

When Summer Comes . . .

. . . The warm tracery of
Summer sunlight steals further
into the room bringing to life
all the delicate colours and
hidden charm of your Royal
Venton Fireplace—in Summer
and Winter the pride of your
home.



Royal Venton

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where you
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On every occasion flowers have a magical way of expressing your thoughts. And gifts of fresh, fragrant blooms are even more appreciated when sent Telegraph-fast through Interflora's unique service. Your floral greetings can be delivered near at hand or almost anywhere in the world within a matter of hours.

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THE MOST TREASURED NAME IN PERFUME...

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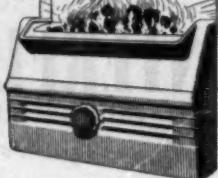
CHILDREN'S SOCIETY OLD TOWN HALL, KENNINGTON SE11

Come down to a warm room every morning

Nothing is so calculated to destroy the effect of a good night's rest than having to come down to an ice-cold room and clean out a dead fireplace. But here's good news. You can now enjoy winter-long warmth and come down every morning to the cosy comfort radiated in abundance by the economical

The OPEN
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need never
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No. 11. Nimbus

(Bay, 1946) Neanco — Kong. Bought for 5,000 guineas — Mrs. M. Glenister's Nimbus won £33,076 during his short racing career. In 1949, he was unbeaten in his four races, winning the 2,000 Guineas and the Derby.

DETERMINATION and sheer grit were the two factors that carried Nimbus to his victories in 1949. It will be remembered that he won his two classic races in photo-finishes — by a short head from Abernant in the Guineas and by a head from Amour Drake in the Derby.

What gave Nimbus that extra speed and staying power? Note the depth through the girth and well-sprung ribs, suggesting great heart room and scope for the action of the lungs. It was these advantages that enabled him to maintain his long and powerful stride, even to the end of the exacting Derby course.

Judge a horse on points and a bookmaker by reputation. For 56 years, the name "Cope" has stood for integrity, dependability and personal service. Send for our fully illustrated brochure today.

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You can depend on **COPE'S**

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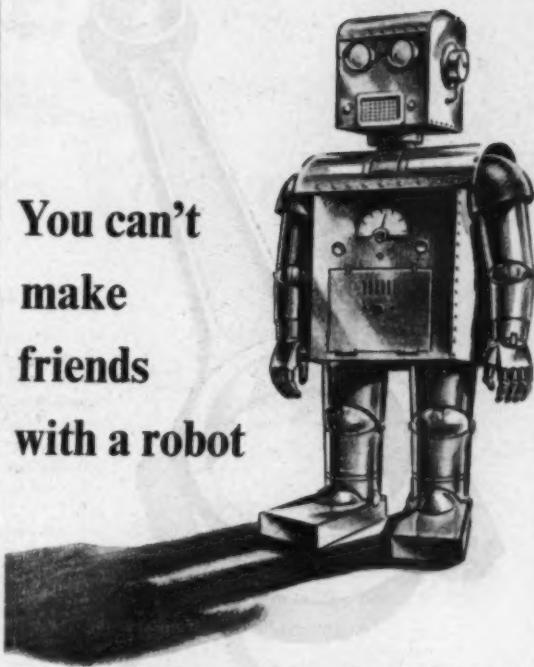
FESTIVAL OF BRITAIN YEAR



England at its fairest

Banking Service at its best
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BANK LIMITED**

You can't
make
friends
with a robot



SCIENTISTS have invented highly ingenious Mechanical men which can work out sums, cross a floor without bumping into furniture and answer questions almost as knowledgeably as Professor Brogan. Nevertheless, most of us would rather have real human beings as companions in our daily lives.

It's rather the same with wood. Wood has a *feel* and a character all its own. No matter how it is sawn, carved & planed, it remains somehow *alive*. You can make friends with it.

Naturally, architects specify wood for its traditional purposes wherever they can. The difficulty, these days, is in knowing what timbers are available and in what quantity. A card to the Timber Development Association will bring you details of many excellent woods which have recently come into the market.

There's nothing like **WOOD**

ISSUED BY THE TIMBER DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION • 21 COLLEGE HILL
LONDON • EC4 and branches throughout the country



Give me
Castrol
every time



The Masterpiece in Oils—approved by
every British car and motor cycle maker

Labels of Distinction



GREYS

are great

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In a changing world,
'Greys' still give the
Virginia smoker the old satis-
faction—undiluted, unaltered.

20 for 3/-

Issued by Godfrey Phillips
Limited





CHARIVARIA

ALTHOUGH rumours of a serious split in the Labour Party are denied, there is no doubt that individual members of the Cabinet have been making some nasty cracks lately.



Herr Walter Ulbricht, addressing pressmen on the subject of the East Berlin Youth Rally, said "During this peace rally we are organizing peace-fighters who will return to Western Germany and stir up the population against the warmonger government." They might adopt as a slogan the old saying "If you wish for war, prepare for peace."

"These American girls—and 25 other students—arrived in London last night to start a 'perfect tour of Europe.' With them is Dr. J. C. Lyons, professor of romance, languages and literature at the University of North Carolina."

"News Chronicle"

They seem to be in expert hands.

A London sub-post office is to close after being managed since 1838 by three generations of the same family. Customers asking for stamps at the telegram grille were often told to try father down the counter.

Contempt of Court

"Mrs. B——, who cried in the dock, was fined an additional £1 for failing to stop when directed."

"Evening Standard"

So many Americans now appear in the B.B.C.'s "In Town To-night" that listeners are beginning to regard it as a trailer of the current week's programme at the Palladium.

"BRITAIN WAITS FOR GERMAN SCRAP"

"Observer"

It seems such a short time since the last one.

Recently a man broke into the house of a resident away on holiday, called up a dealer on the telephone, and sold the entire contents for cash—thus missing a golden chance of letting the house furnished for a fortnight.

DOUGLAS.



CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?

IF I had any influence with the General Post Office I would arrange to test a theory I have about overseas telephone calls. In the public mind they are connected with gigantic business transactions, lovers' hearts crying out, instant decisions and the immediate marshalling of resources.

Yet, in the overwhelming majority of calls, what actually is talked about? I believe that study—and eavesdropping—would bear out my own observation that there are three recurring themes. These are (1) How are you? (2) Everything's all right, everything's fine, and (3) Can you hear me now?

All calls begin, inevitably, with a conversational "How are you?" The caller is testing with his toe before plunging in, but the person at the receiving end, awaiting an announcement of surpassing importance, is thrown off balance. He can't conceive that anybody would go to this expense merely to inquire after the state of his health, and his reply, therefore, is "What's that? What's that you say?"

This means that the caller, who has made "Hello, Charles, how are you?" his opening purely as a matter of form, and didn't intend using more than a few seconds on it, has to repeat it. When Charles has figured out what the question is he says he is fine, and then, of course, he asks the caller the same question. The caller says he is fine too.

The fact that the caller also is fine is rather puzzling to Charles, who has been expecting to be told of some major disaster. He therefore asks, suspiciously, "How is everybody?" "Oh, everybody's fine" is the off-hand reply; "how's everyone with you?" "Not bad, no complaints," comes the answer, followed by an anxious "Is everything all right?" This brings the answer "Everything's all right, everything's fine."

Naturally, this passage raises in more pressing fashion the question why the call was made. The caller is fine, and so are everything and everybody else. Consequently, Charles asks, perhaps indignantly, since he has been scared half out of his skin, "What's this all about, then?" Or, before Charles can put his question, the caller, formalities out of the way, plunges in.

It then develops that although everything and everybody are fine, he is completely out of funds, Uncle Ferguson has run off to be a sheep farmer in Australia, Teddy has been sent down, the roof has been badly damaged by lightning and heavy rains, the car was wrecked in an accident—nobody was hurt, luckily—and Charles had better return at once.

His catalogue exhausted, the caller takes a breather, literal and figurative, and waits for a groan or explosion at the other end. Something, however, has gone wrong. Charles says "I didn't quite hear you, John. Would you repeat that, please?" The caller, having the same trouble, says "What's that? I can't make you out."

CHARLES. I can't hear you, John.

JOHN. Oh. (*Shouting*) Can you hear me now?

CHARLES. That's better. Now would you mind repeating what you said a moment ago?

JOHN. Sorry. I didn't get that.

CHARLES. Can you hear me now?

JOHN. I can hear you.

CHARLES. I said would you mind repeating what you said a moment ago.

JOHN. Oh. Okay. From what point?

CHARLES. From what point what?

JOHN. From what point am I to repeat?

CHARLES. I got the word "completely." You were completely something. That's all.

JOHN. Oh. Okay.

He has filled his lungs preparatory to a sustained bellowing when the operator cuts in. "Your three minutes are up," she says. "Would you like to continue?"

This is too much for Charles. "Listen, John," he shouts into the mouthpiece as quickly as he can, "write me air mail about it, will you?" John has chosen this moment to ask the operator what it would cost to continue, and doesn't understand what Charles is saying. "What's that?" he yells. "I said write me air mail about it," Charles replies. "Okay," says John. "It's been good hearing your voice, Charles."

"It's been good hearing yours. Good-bye."

"Good-bye."

The conversation is over. John feels a sudden stab of regret. "I could kick myself," he reflects. "I should have asked whether he got those biscuits mother sent."

S S

POETS AT THE FESTIVAL

Robert Browning

AT THE SKYLON

(To E.B.B.)

I

SO, there the skylon prods the sky,
Two graceful crescents, one
(You see its outline?) lifted high,
Poised, an odd sign, against the sun,
Where we meet, you and I.

II

Upward it soars: the sky's so far
As to exceed its reach.
To both its slender limits are
Drawn, but in vain, untouched each—
Earth, and the furthest star.

III

Stand here a little: only move
If the loud thunders shake
Or lightnings pierce the clouds above;
Then, flee the cored space, and take
Safe shelter in our love!

IV

That's all—except, dear, only this
(When you hold your face aslant
To take my proud and burning kiss)—
There's a moral somewhere; but I can't
Remember what it is. G. H. VALLINS



LORD OF THE DESERT

"International agreements? Us lions don't bother with them!"



"Good gracious! The water must be filthy."

NOTHING ENCLOSED

LITERATURE is fast disappearing. Soon there will be none left, and it is no use saying we shall not regret its passing. It was, for us, one of the major pleasures of buying toothpaste.

No one turned more avidly than we to the illustrations of pre-molars, and some of the more enterprising tubes had photographs, in full colour, of healthy gums. Best of all we liked reading the consensus of medical opinion on the prevention of caries.

Buying toothpaste nowadays can be a bitter disappointment. Often there is nothing in the carton but toothpaste.

It is the same with soap. We can remember when the leaflet under the wrapper showed jolly people splashing about in bathrooms more magnificent than anything we have ever washed in, but we did not mind too much because we were all using the same soap.

The last tablet we bought did not even have directions for use.

We used to thrill to the information, imparted by our favourite breakfast cereal, that the people who made it had a research laboratory. It was manned by a staff of qualified chemists and there was always a photograph of two of them, with their hair nicely brushed, talking together in a corner among a lot of retorts and bottles.

We always thought the older chemist, the one holding the test-tube, looked the more capable. They were obviously testing a doubtful cornflake with a powerful reagent. Would the litmus-paper turn red?

There was drama for you! But a veil of secrecy has lately been thrown over it. We never see it now.

Our own opinion is that the cornflake laboratory has been taken over for work on atomic isotopes.

Even those slips of perforated paper, which when held up to the light told you who had done the packing and inspecting, are becoming rarer. They are still to be found occasionally in boxes of chocolates, but you can no longer count on them in tins of pandrops.

This is particularly depressing. It gave a personal touch to a pandrop when we knew it had been packed by, say, No. 421 and inspected by No. X3. It tasted a lot better too.

We could not help wondering about X3. Once a young pandrop packer, having worked his way up from liquorice lumps, did he go to evening classes and industriously fit himself for the higher position? Was his elevation due to influence or did he just happen to be next in order of seniority?

We do not know. But we tried to share the joy of X3's mother when he proudly announced his

promotion to pandrop inspector. Of course, X3 could be a girl, but we can't be bothered with that.

Our deepest regret for passing literature is reserved for the gradual eclipse of "None Genuine Without The Signature." If it did not always assume the status of a leaflet, being sometimes affixed to the product, it was nevertheless a close link between us and the manufacturer.

There was something rather fine, we always thought, about the head of a great firm busy at his desk when everybody else had gone home. There he was, signing labels on bottles of hair tonic. Anybody who helped him was running the risk of being charged with forgery. He could expect no assistance.

Our admiration for the heads of tobacco companies was unbounded. The sheer physical effort involved in signing each cigarette as it came off the assembly line must have been enormous.

On second thoughts we are inclined to think that they signed their names on the cigarette papers before they were fed into the hopper. Otherwise they would never get any holidays.

We are not altogether surprised that there are not so many "None Genuine Without The Signature" products as there used to be. Since the export drive began only manufacturers with very short names could hope to stand the strain.

The only good thing we can see about the passing of literature is the Portrait of the Founder. In fact we are rather pleased about this. We have always said it is misleading to judge a firm's standing by its whiskers.

Mr. ARTHUR MORELAND

WE learn with regret of the death of Arthur Moreland, at the age of eighty-three. Mr. Moreland's first *Punch* drawing appeared in September 1916, and he contributed regularly during, and immediately after, the first World War.

TALK

OFTEN I talk to men, on this or that,
Through the long night, and chiefly through my hat;
And they, in turn, through hats of different size,
Build confident assertion on surmise.

So it continues, hour succeeding hour
As each small bud of thought bursts into flower,
While, listening in limbo, sit the sages,
The Great Ones of the contemplative ages,
And all the sons of knowledgeable Man
Who ever talked since Time itself began—
Listening now, eager to catch one glow
Of thought not born five thousand years ago,
One little curtain raised, one tiny pelmet,
One word not said through some old Roman helmet.



NO SHAWMS, NO CRUMHORNS

British Musical Instruments Exhibition

I HAVE touched the keys that Chopin touched, plucked the strings of George III's double bass, sought out the scale of C on virginals by Thomas White. I have even commissioned from Mr. Eric Halfpenny, Hon. Secretary of the Galpin Society, a recital on a large liquorice boomerang called a tenor cornett (c. 1600), which produced a subtle mooing sound and caused the performer's eyes to bulge alarmingly.

But I was privileged: the power of the Press still goes for something. You, if you visit No. 4 St. James's Square before the end of the month, won't be allowed to take such liberties with musical history; the temporary custodians of these treasures have had to adorn the more accessible exhibits with "Please do not touch" notices, and whole families — generations, even — of flutes and fiddles, serpents and ophicleides, gitterns, citterns and hautboys, howeboies, hoboys, how-boys or oboes lie tongue-tied under glass. Dreams of a delicious din thus muted to necessary nothingness will excite odd imaginings in you; your secret ear will vibrate to a silent clamour, as if lute and clavichord, inventionshorn and viol were begging to be given back their voices. Perhaps at night time they get up a band of their own, led by one of the little kits—violins so

small that the dancing-masters of other times carried them in their coat pockets.

The Clerk of Oxenford, you will recall, would rather have had twenty volumes of Aristotle than "robes riche, or fithele or gay sautrye," and Chaucer, with his trick of ingenuous *non sequitur*, manages to convey a mild surprise at such an eccentric preference. But perhaps the good Clerk merely evinced the Englishman's traditional preference for instruments blown and sucked (I assume that the mouth organ lent to the present Exhibition needs a two-way wind stream) rather than for those bowed and plucked. Certainly, though there are "fitheles" in abundance at St. James's Square—most of which look much of a muchness to the untutored eye, though the specialists would have plenty to say about high bellies and short necks, or (if I have it down correctly) "shallow dishing on the plates"—it is the blowing section that is most richly represented. Its centrepiece is the Old Testament companion of the sautrye (or psaltery), a winsome sackbut; and if on seeing it you are moved to exclaim "See this beautiful trombone," you need feel no shame. This is the trombone's noble ancestor, born in 1557, and the form of the instrument seems scarcely to have altered at all in nearly four hundred years; if this one got among the trombones by mistake in a town band, only a passing musicologist would notice the difference.



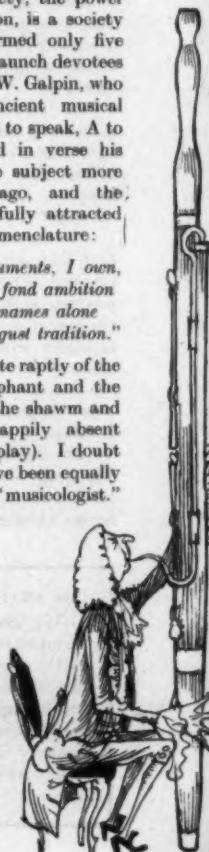
NORMAN MANBRIDGE

The Galpin Society, the power behind the Exhibition, is a society of musicologists, formed only five years ago by a few staunch devotees of the late Canon F. W. Galpin, who knew all about ancient musical instruments from, so to speak, A to G. *Punch* reviewed in verse his learned book on the subject more than forty years ago, and the reviewer was powerfully attracted by its charms of nomenclature:

*"But there are instruments, I own,
That fire me with a fond ambition
To master for their names alone
Apart from their august tradition."*

And he goes on to write raptly of the fipple-flute, the poliphant and the humstrum (all, like the shawm and the crumhorn, unhappily absent from the present display). I doubt whether he would have been equally charmed by the word "musicologist."

I don't know if the Society in its historical probings has exhumed this word from an ancient manuscript, or invented it for its own purposes; it is not a beautiful or euphonious one; but I suppose that if the language needs to distinguish between those who love music and those who are





passionate to get an old tenoroon under the X-ray and discover whether its bore is cylindrical or conical, then we shall have to put up with it. But let no one answer any question of mine with "Well—musicologically speaking . . ."

However, we must not be captious. There are many compensations in the—er—etymology of musicology. Even with the instruments in glassed and frozen silence we can still hear music floating from the pages of our catalogues—cornettino, trompe, symphonium, ophimonocleide. Can the harpsichord make a sound more lovely than its own name? Or the virginals one more virginal? Or the buzine one more boozy? Is it not delightful to learn that our old friend the sackbut derives from the old French *saquier-boiter*, "to pull and to push"? (Some say from the old Spanish *sacar del bueco*, "to exhaust the chest," but the musicologist frowns on this; properly, the chest should not be exhausted by the skilled executant on the saykebud, shackebute, shagbush, shagbolt, sackbut or trombone; besides, the phrase could be just as true of the men who shift grand pianos.)

Not all the instruments to be seen in the high, gilded and generously provided rooms of the Arts Council (this is their headquarters) could be confident of house-room in a music-lover's home. One eerie exhibit with the innocent appearance of an ordinary upright piano can at the throw of a lever become an organ, and, worse, at the throw of another, assume both identities simultaneously; this means (I feel I must try to make this absolutely

clear) that the performer, pedalling energetically on pedals arranged on either side of the conventional pair and allowing his fingers to wander idly over the noisy keys, produces notes both blown and struck. I leave the effect to your imagination, and hope that you won't wake up in the night fancying that you hear it. And how many musicians would care to sit at home playing themselves selections on Mr. P. Fentum's barrel organ (c. 1815, 3 stops, 30 tunes on three rolls, mahogany and rosewood)? I was regaled with a haphazard rendering of "Charlie is My Darling" on this, and was left unshaken in my conviction that a barrel organ has only one endearing feature—the handle turns out of tempo with the music, thus inducing in the audience a sensation of pleasurable vertigo.

Towards the end of my visit the idea seized me that someone should get together an orchestra of the size and constitution of, say, Orlando Gibbons' time, equipped with contemporary instruments, and play some of Mr. Gibbons' instrumental music, just to see what it must have sounded like to Mr. Gibbons. I don't imagine for a moment that the idea hasn't seized other people; what puzzles me is that nothing seems to have been done about it, and I can only suppose that there is



some abstruse musical obstacle in the way; perhaps the pampered modern bassoonist with his gleaming and multiplex bassoon falters at the stark simplicity of a three-centuries-old curtal, corthol or fagotto, begging to be excused lest he fail to interpret the composer's intention. If that's the only trouble, then—for I badly want to hear some of these instruments in concert—why not assemble the same combination to perform one of the very modern works, which could give no trouble on that score?

Whether you are a musicologist, etymologist or merely an archaeologist, you should get a lot of pleasure out of this Exhibition. And in gratitude to the Galpin Society you might keep your eyes open for any of the items needed to bridge the few musicological gaps. They are terribly short of shawms: crying out loud for crumhorns.

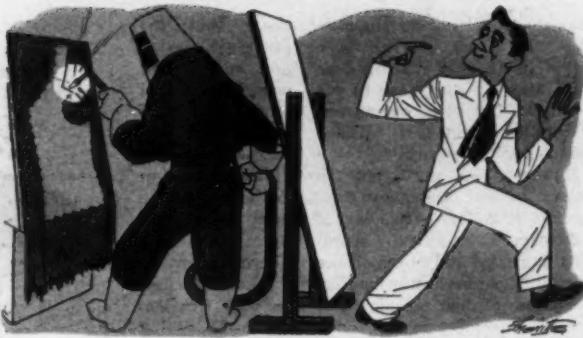
J. B. BOOTHROYD



AT THE PICTURES

The Man in the White Suit
Love Happy

THE faintly deprecating murmurs that have arisen in some quarters about *The Man in the White Suit* (Director: ALEXANDER MACKENDRICK) set me searching for some analogy—I'm sure there must be one, well enough known, but I can't think of it—for a situation which has X, whose passionate enthusiasm has given Y a reputation he would never have claimed for himself, beginning to criticize Y for not living up to it. This is "another Ealing comedy," and it seems to me an excellent one; I like it better (so far as one can compare reactions six weeks apart) than *The Lavender Hill Mob*; and I believe that most of the minor objections that have been laboriously brought against it are the result of a vague feeling in the objector compounded partly of "I'm not as bowled over by this as I rashly said I would be" and partly of "It's against nature for these people to be so good every time, anyway." Well, this time again they are undeniably very good indeed. The combination of an ingenious idea, a bright, funny, imaginative script, skilful playing and perceptive, brisk direction has resulted once more in a really satisfying comedy. ALEC GUINNESS portrays an earnest young research assistant in the laboratory of a

[*The Man in the White Suit*]

From Gas-cutter to Wearer
Sidney Stratton—ALEC GUINNESS

textile firm who at last succeeds, after much comically tuneful and explosive experiment, in producing a synthetic thread that is both unbreakable and impossible to soil. (Something to do with *long-chain molecules*—it sounds very convincing.) His appearance in an all but indestructible, relentlessly immaculate suit woven of this thread rouses panic in the whole textile industry, from millionaire employer to factory-hand, and the situation resolves into its simplest and most spectacular terms, a chase—by night, so that the suit shall show up well. But not too much is made of this chase; much of the real strength of the picture is in the invention and the details of its earlier incident, notably the laboratory scenes with the bubbling, chirping apparatus and the scenes with the wary (and wily) directors, and in its minor characters, notably VIDA HOPE as the truculently class-conscious but affectionate weaver. The whole thing is thoroughly enjoyable.

interruptions), it fails even to allow the BROTHERS as much to do as they used to be given in those days. The appearances of GROUCHO particularly are far too infrequent, though (as a "private eye," in a Sherlock Holmes hat) he is supposed to be telling the story in flashback—the story of the missing Romanoff diamonds. *Love Happy*, like so many meaningless and inexplicable, film titles, is the name of a stage show put on by some of the characters in the film—which of course means that there are continual scenes of rehearsal with their attendant dialogue debris of "That was swell" and "Take five, kids." As usual CHICO presides at the piano, HARPO at the harp, but we hope in vain for the more valuable act of GROUCHO and CHICO engaged in verbal analysis. HARPO seems to have most of what good moments there are.

* * * * *
Survey
(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The most recent Marx Brothers film, *Love Happy* (Director: DAVID MILLER), reaches us two years late, having been held up because of the imbecile objection that one of the script-writers was BEN HECHT; but it was hardly worth waiting for. In manner, it's more than twenty years late: going back to the cautious formula of their very earliest films (straight musical comedy with occasional fully-licensed



Marxism
HARPO; GROUCHO; CHICO

In London: *Strangers on a Train* (15/8/51) is a good typical Hitchcock, full of tricks and suspense. *Murder Inc.* is a very well done, absorbing crime picture with HUMPHREY BOGART on the side of the law.

The only new releases I would mention are the Disney *Alice in Wonderland* (8/8/51) and its attendant very pleasing Disney documentary *Beaver Valley*.

RICHARD MALLETT

THE TEA PLAN

IT's only a smallish sized man I'm looking for. He has hairy white string tied double round both knees. The easy way he approached me—a stranger—as a lifelong friend; the obvious sincerity of his first words—characteristically an invitation, to which surprise alone stopped me responding with more alacrity. You don't meet it every day.

"Would you like," the man inquired, proffering a pot, "to brew us a drop of tea?" He had left his equipment on the road: only a whiff of clinker and tar gave me wind of his profession.

I considered his offer. A pity he hadn't left a note earlier in the week, but one cannot disappoint callers. With both hands I took it, his mug, a monstrous vessel. Peeping over the rim, I glimpsed a shapeless fusion of sugar and tea-leaves lying sluggishly on the bottom; I was all for a quick drowning with boiling water.

"One thing," he continued, rather taking me for granted, "have you," he scratched an ear, "a pot like this one?" I thought it was his sense of fun—this idea of a replica—as one might have said a flamingo or a pair of thumb-screws. It was big enough to wash in; also it was a rare shade of khaki. Yet he was serious; it had to do with the mate he had left behind. It hadn't occurred to me he was part of a double act, the royal plural "us" being common among the native artisans. His mate was still out there; he said he was "levelling." I stood quiet to listen. Yes, there was no mistaking the sound—he was "levelling," out there. Never stopping for a minute, and his partner away looking for provisions! Occasionally he gave voice; holy and a cheerful note, keeping time with each distinct "level." This was he who had no pot. I thought how joyously he overtopped his potlessness, and felt quite humble. I would do my best for the man; something would be found, a broad jug perhaps . . .

His colleague expressed confidence in me. He produced a small thing wrapped in newspaper.

TRADE EXHIBITION 3RD



"It's 'is," he said. "Give us a shout when it's ready."

I went back to boil water. The package proved harmless. Black and white grains—the mixture as before, with not a trace of nitroglycerine. Perhaps I was lulled into false security; anyhow he didn't spring the trap till later.

There was still the problem of the potless man. I decided finally he would be best brewed in a stout teapot. When I put the lid on, tea trickled through the spout and the hole in the lid where string should be but isn't. Perhaps he lacked his full share: I should like him to know the reason. I put both on a tray with a pink beaker, screening the Big Thing from it so as to reduce its embarrassment. I set the trio on the step, I shouted "Tea up!"—and a face came over the hedge.

"Leave 'em there"—apparently a switch in plans—"and I'll fetch 'em."

I nodded. He seemed to think we were being watched; I shouldn't have raised my voice. The safest thing to do was to get back in the house immediately.

It was such a clever touch, the whole Tea Business, just to put one off one's guard. I discovered that when he brought back the empties.

"Be all right, will it, if we leave the tools here till morning?" Not a mention of tea.

You see, I was unprepared. I was closing the door. I supposed it would be all right. Were they

very big? I visualized the size of a spokeshave: one likes to have room to turn around on the lawn.

He said "Well no, just barrers and things." But it was too late—he was half-way through the gate.

So there they have rested, undisturbed on my little lawn, for over a week, an enormous mass. The brace of wheelbarrows are not alone. There are the "things"—shovels and picks and red flags and numerous devices to which no name can be appended. I still make conjectures about his motive: in view of his deliberate planning he had much at stake.

Yet I am not entirely ungrateful. There is one weapon I shall be pleased to hang on to. It has a lawn-mower handle attached to a huge knob of iron. There can be only one name for it. I like to picture it in its glory, in the expert hands of his mate. I can never hope to emulate his skill but I shall improve. All I am looking for now is a soft bit of road.

Punch Festival Exhibition

The Punch Room and an Exhibition of recent original drawings are on view to readers at the Punch Office, 10 Bouvierie Street, E.C.4, on any WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY and FRIDAY from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M.

THE WRITER'S CRAFT

XVI. Humour

THE other day I related a little anecdote to a friend. "The great Clemenceau," I observed, "walking with a companion on his eightieth birthday, had his attention drawn to the charms of an exceptionally beautiful girl who overtook them. '*Ma foi!*' groaned Clemenceau, '*être encore soixante-dix !*'" My friend said nothing, and seemed to be waiting for me to continue. Thinking that he might perhaps lack my easy familiarity with the French language, I said "Ah, to be seventy again!" After a long pause he remarked "One can't put the clock back, unfortunately."

A few touches of humour will enliven the dullest work, but so widely do opinions differ as to what is funny and what is not that for my part I content myself with using only those situations that are known to be regarded by all as undeniably comic. Typical of such situations are the following: The skin of some species of fruit causes a heavy fall. A man chases his hat. A mother-in-law visits her daughter. I have from time to time used all three, and many more, in my work, but never to excess, limiting myself to the bare minimum of humour necessary to provide comic relief in moments of unendurable tension. The following example illustrates the use of the first situation:

"'It's the end, I tell you!' There was a note of hysteria in De Quincey's voice.

The veins stood out in knots on Wordsworth's spiritual forehead, but the lean Grasmere man had himself well in hand. 'And if it is indeed the end, we'll meet it unafraid, my friend!' He scribbled a brief note on his shirt cuff. 'Have a banana, man. It'll steady you!'

The little opium-eater helped himself from the proffered dish with a trembling hand.

'Southeby is pinned on Helvellyn,' continued Wordsworth evenly, 'by the Bishop of Llandaff. Has he sufficient force to hack his way through to our assistance? Bell and Gill are little more than physical

wrecks, and in a running fight on horseback Landor is as much a menace to his own side as to the enemy. The others are little better.'

Coleridge grunted assent. 'A couple of boulders hurtling into a mountain road,' he said, 'and you've seen the last of Wilkinson.'

Wordsworth nodded. 'It seems, then, that except for the slender hope that Hazlitt may be able to throw himself across the Langdales on to the Bishop's rear, we are likely, within the next few hours, to find ourselves face to face with Wilson of Elleray and his men, hopelessly outnumbered and with no prospect of relief.' He selected a banana with fastidious care. 'I'm going to burn *The Excursion*', he announced deliberately. He turned resolutely to his desk, only to be brought to the ground in an instant, with a crash that rattled the windows in their frames. The cause of the mishap was a banana skin, carelessly discarded by the dreamy Coleridge, and the big poet's shoulders heaved with suppressed mirth as he helped his friend to his feet. De Quincey, his fears forgotten, was in convulsions, and the austere Grasmere man himself had much ado to hide a smile.

'An animated scene!' exclaimed a harsh, grating voice, as Wordsworth leapt, like some great jungle cat, for flint and tinder."

It may well be objected that this little joke, though perhaps recognized as such by all, is still hardly strong enough to win more than an indulgent smile from the reader. My answer is that, when nerves are tautened like fiddle-strings by excitement, any excuse for a hearty laugh, no matter how trifling the pretext, will be seized with avidity. A good example of this came to my notice only the other day, at a cricket match. At a moment of great tension one of the batsmen had the misfortune to knock a small chip of wood from his bat; not, one would have thought, an incident likely to provoke any

great hilarity. Nevertheless, in a moment the crowd was helpless with mirth, and on all sides the spectators, the tears streaming from their eyes, were to be seen exchanging with their neighbours delighted comments on the incident.

A final brief example should be sufficient to demonstrate to the student the possibilities of this really very simple method of adding colour to his work:

"'And the Bishop?' shot out Wordsworth. 'What of Doctor Watson?'

'At my heels.' The elegant Southeby pointed with a gesture of distaste to a cloud of dust advancing rapidly along the valley road.

'And Wilkinson?'

Southeby smiled grimly. 'I know of only one man in England,' he said, 'who can break Watson's toe-hold.' He laid a hand affectionately on Coleridge's shoulder, and the big Ottery St. Mary man flushed with pleasure. 'He had little chance.'

Wordsworth clenched his teeth. 'We must look to the living,' he said. 'Wilson sent Lloyd the black spot last night. He'll stand by us, if only to save his own skin! To Brathay!'

'And the sooner the better,' drawled Coleridge, 'for here comes the Bishop.'

'And there goes my hat!' exclaimed De Quincey in comical dismay.

In spite of the oncoming menace, the three poets burst as one man into a hearty laugh as the volatile little opium-eater, grinning broadly, skipped nimbly after his head-gear."

As an exercise in the use of humour, I suggest that students should re-model my examples, adapting them so as to include the third situation to which I have alluded—the visit of a mother-in-law. It will not be easy, as the action hardly lends itself to the smooth introduction of such an incident, but the attempt is well worth making. T. S. WATT





"Keep smiling, dear—in case there's a gap."

OUT INTO THE WORLD

A Dramatic Fragment

MR. DREE. By the way, to-morrow you are leaving home to make your ways in the world.

SIMON. Is mother privy to this bombshell?

MRS. DREE. I thought of it. I worked out that if we did not have to keep you we could have lobster twice a week ourselves.

ANDREW. The least we can expect is to be launched in style. I should like a directorship. You often see them advertised in *The Times*.

MR. DREE. I have already given you the finest gift in my power, your heredity. Money would merely muffle its development. Start at the bottom. I shall be interested to hear where you get to.

MRS. DREE. Now mind, we shall be expecting you to pop in for tea on Christmas Day.

MR. DREE. As this is the bairns' last night of happy parasitism, let us make it memorable. Rummy and permission to play the pianola without washing first.

MRS. DREE. We must leave time for packing. It will have to be carefully checked. We don't want them to confuse use with ownership.

MR. DREE. We have forgotten our third child. It will be best to make a clean sweep.

MRS. DREE. Isn't Peggy a bit young? She still takes her share of the housework for granted.

MR. DREE. The responsibility of providing for her will give her brothers just the stimulus to effort that they need before marriage gears them to the grindstone.

SIMON. The N.S.P.C.C. might take umbrage at finding her reared in a bachelor atmosphere of stale cigar smoke and rings on the top of the piano.

ANDREW. We shall see that they do.

MR. DREE. If you can afford cigars, you can afford a dimity room in which a young girl's reveries can proceed undisturbed.

PEGGY. I was leaving anyway. Pam and Beryl and I are going on the land.

MRS. DREE. Send us some eggs.

ANDREW. And plenty of poultry. Chicken sandwiches go well with a nightcap.

MR. DREE. Take care to get on the right kind of land. Gravel is much less exhausting than clay.

PEGGY. The land we intend to go on is South Africa. Pam thinks she has a flair for open-cast diamond mining. Beryl has bet her five bob she's wrong.

MR. DREE. Now who wants an introduction? I know a man who has some vacancies at the bottom of his firm. They are Industrial Waste Deodorizers.

MRS. DREE. Wouldn't it be better to make them stand on their own feet?

MR. DREE. I owe Jenkinson a lunch. He is short of labour and might regard help with his difficulties as an adequate return for his hospitality.

SIMON. I shall trade on my charm.

MR. DREE. You'll get no tax allowance for depreciation. If you must trade on anything, trade on credit.

ANDREW. Polonius, a more helpful parent than you, advised his son to be neither a borrower nor a lender.

MR. DREE. Polonius was a Civil Servant and had a typically impractical attitude towards business.

SIMON. Wasn't he some kind of politician, an Elder Statesman perhaps? What a Romanes Lecture he would have made.

PEGGY. Pam was a wizard Polonius in the Guides Play. She was so good we put "The Seven Ages of Man" in for her too. Beryl did the Olivier part; I can't remember what it is called.

ANDREW. Do you feel no shame at throwing your children out into the hurly-burly so young, so tender, so unspotted?

MR. DREE. I arranged for you to have a term in the Army class. Now there is one point I want to impress on you. Things will be a bit difficult to begin with and we don't want you to undermine your health by pinching and scraping. Just for the first year—the first year, mind—mother and I don't expect anything elaborate in the way of presents.

MRS. DREE. And when we pay our weekly visit to you, remember that plain food, enough of it, can be just as nourishing, if not as amusing, as *haute cuisine*.

MR. DREE. When we spend our first winter with Peggy we shall be quite content with the wines of the country.

PEGGY. I might send a clutch of eggs some time. No doubt there is some kind of reduced rate for ballast . . . Oh, Mrs. Glyd. What's the matter?

MRS. GLYD. All my poppies leaving the nest and me not seeing how I can serve both nest and poppies.

MR. DREE. There will be less for you to do here. You can relax. You can valet me.

MRS. GLYD. Not a night has passed without my reading the darlings to sleep. First it was Hans Andersen, then it was Stevenson, and for the last few years it's been Gibbon. They would toss uneasy heads if their Glyddy-goat were absent from their pillow-side.

MR. DREE. I am willing to let you enter their employment, if they pay me a substantial transfer fee.

MRS. DREE. Now, there's one of those incentives that young men find so helpful nowadays. Trust your father, dears, to see that everyone gets the best out of an economy.

FINIS

R. G. G. PRICE

BACK ROOM JOYS

Showing our Legal Knowledge

"OF course, it's a matter, I reckon, of purely Scots law . . ."

"If I, with intent to rob, sock a man on the jaw . . ."

We're proud of that "Scots," we normally call it Scotch,

And "intent to rob," we feel, puts us up a notch. We bring out the jargon as if to the manner born—Although when we don't understand it it drives us to fury

And we're equally eager to hold it to public scorn. But here we are citizens, men of the world, "special jury,"

With a good working knowledge of really quite recondite terms

And a very sound grasp of the law (somehow *always a "grasp"*).

We luckily don't hear the barrister opposite gasp, We are much too engrossed to notice his positive squirms;

The attentive ears, pursed lips, of our listeners claim us—

We're expounding a "Writ of Mandamus."

JUSTIN RICHARDSON



"He'll have something to say—
be notices every little scratch."



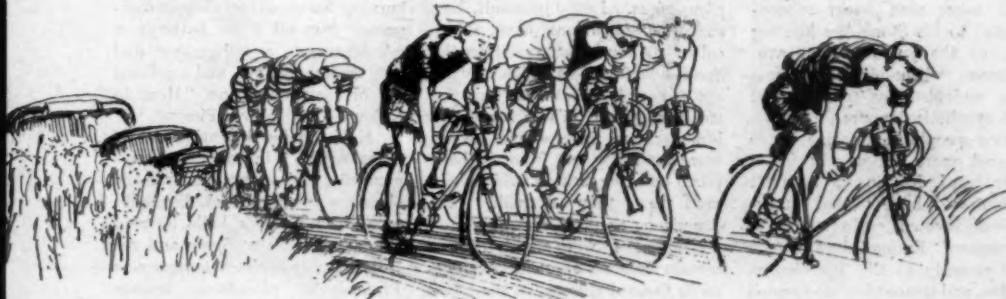
WHEELMEN

HERE, pointilliste, the aspens dot their shade
And the rough mesh of grass holds coolness still;
The panniered cycles rest from noon's long hill
Against an age-grey gate, and lunch is laid.
Around and up, for plain and hill are one,
A clutch of racing cyclists scorns the sun.
Pleasant to count them; pleasanter to muse
On what they gain that we perhaps may lose.

What are they heading for, hell-for-leather,
Swift, light racers?
What do they seek with their backs to the weather,
Dust in their faces?
Only the miles of macadam for spurning,
Edge of the sea as a reason for turning,
Only another bright day for the burning!

What are we finding, pack-braked, what desires
So mount the dismounting, the hill-push, the slowness
that tires
The strongest when longest the last white unrolling
Sad glimmer of road means no more than a sleep for
consoling,
The ground for a mattress, a bough dripping rain-drops
at waking,
And dawn all unglazed and unframed and all beauty
for taking?

What are they heading for, hell-for-leather,
What do they fear that they hurry all huddled together,
Swift, light racers?
We? We are finding ourselves in the sweetness of
gazing
Where noon spreads a brightness beyond and a shadow
for lazing.





MR. PICNIC

IT is an odd thing that a hard-boiled egg or a bloater-paste sandwich can be greatly improved in flavour merely by being carried out of doors and across a few fields. The egg becomes somehow more eggy, the paste more bloated.

Every picnicker knows this and is expected to discuss it at length. In fact a picnic can be accounted a failure if the table-talk deviates in the slightest (warnings of approaching wasps excluded) from a straightforward commentary on the ambrosial quality of the food.

The reason for all this is obvious. Deep down every picnicker feels that he has earned his food the hard way, that he has won his hard-boiled egg from the eyrie of some fierce eagle, wrestled for hours with a man-eating bloater, slain the salami with his bare hands. The picnic takes man back, subconsciously, to his Stone-Age hunting days, to the years of his cavemanliness, when his palate was fresh, undefiled by tobacco and harsh synthetic flavours.

Few people, I imagine, have prepared more thoroughly for a picnic than I. Nothing has been left to chance: I have visited an exhibition devoted entirely to the technique of "Eating Out of Doors" (held recently at the Tea Centre, London, and arranged by the Council of Industrial Design in co-operation

with the Tea Bureau); I have pried—somewhat conjecturally—into the history of picnicking; I have hoarded chocolate biscuits for months; and a large X marks the approved spot on my map of Surrey. And since I happen to know a man at the Meteorological Office I have no fears about the weather.

Let me tell you what I have discovered. Well, first, that the British are the most enthusiastic and inveterate of picnickers. I readily admit that the French have a word for it (*pique-nique*)—and can you imagine a word with an etym. more dub.?), but I submit that the consumption of large, chef-cooked *dîners* at little tables set on the pavements of Paris is not picnicking as we understand it. It may be eating out of doors, but it is no *pique-nique*. I readily admit, too, that the Americans have things called barbecues (borrowed from the Spanish *barbacoa*) on which they are apt to grill enormous king-size steaks *al fresco*. These barbecues, however, are fixtures and seldom more than fifty feet from the back porch and the cocktail cabinet. In my view they disqualify the Americans as picnickers.

Again, I will admit that a certain amount of picnicking goes on in Central Europe, in the Black Forest, the Tyrol and possibly the

Carpathians, though it is accompanied by too much *lieder*-singing and Stein-waving for my taste. And there is nothing in Chekhov to suggest that the Russian picnic was ever anything more than a frivolous pastime of the bourgeoisie.

If I have still to prove that the British pioneered the picnic let me remind you that the sandwich was invented by an Englishman, John Montagu, fourth Earl of Sandwich (1718–1792), and that a picnic without sandwiches is unthinkable. We British have been eating out of doors for centuries, ever since we invented cricket, ever since we invented holiday resorts, newsprint and fish-and-chips. John Bull is Mr. Picnic.

What else have I discovered? That the manufacturers are trying to make things easy for Mr. Picnic. They are offering him such remarkable aids to picnicking as "a kettle which boils water no matter how it rains or blows, using newspaper, leaves, dead bracken or twigs as fuel," an electric kettle "which runs off a car battery," a one-and-a-half-gallon water-bucket weighing just over an ounce, a contrivance for turning sea water into drinking water, a "floating knife" (for spreading jam under water?), collapsible telescopic plastic beakers, a portable radio and direction-finder... Mr. Picnic should welcome these gadgets, no doubt, as useful, perhaps essential, items of camping equipment; but he should be on his guard against further developments. If the manufacturers are encouraged too much they will produce a portable, collapsible picnic hut, completely wasp-proof and ant-proof, and equipped with a charcoal-burning barbecue, an electric dishwasher (run off a car battery), a television set, a refrigerator and easy chairs. Oh, yes, and a printed set of instructions on "How to Enjoy a Trouble-Free Picnic."

Half the fun in eating out of doors, surely, is in evading and surmounting such natural hazards and obstacles as blown sand, flies, ants, wasps, thunderbolts, bulls, farmers, stray dogs, exhaust fumes and golf balls *without any elaborate apparatus*. Professional picnickers, tramps, agricultural labourers, men who dig

holes in roads, soldiers and poets, seem to manage quite well with the simplest equipment. A can of beans, a brushwood fire and a penknife are enough for most vagabonds. R. L. Stevenson, you will remember, merely dunked his bread in the river. I have never actually dipped bread in a river myself, but I'm sure it must be delicious. There is practically no work involved in the preparation of this simple meal, and no washing up afterwards. Fitzgerald's recipe "A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou" is also a great labour-saver. Simplicity, then, at all costs. An "attractive easily carried basket containing four cups, two one-pint vacuum flasks, sandwich tins, milk flask and butter container, at 28s 6d. the set" should be enough even for the most fastidious.

I am well aware, of course, that picnics in the nineteenth century were often very elaborate affairs indeed, stiffly and stuffily formal and attended by retinues of servants. (Fashionable Londoners formed a "Picnic Society" and called themselves Picnickians.) I doubt very much, though, whether the participants got as much fun out of

these shenanigans as the thousands who junketed on pasta sandwiches and bottled beer on the heaths, moors, downs, and beaches. The art of picnicking, I insist, is in travelling light in mind and material.

My own method is to select a likely spot (I am firm but courteous with those who have other ideas), preferably one behind a wind-break, a groyne or a sight-screen, and to park the picnic basket as unobtrusively as possible. Then I pace out a distance of twenty yards and establish the decoy. This consists of a sheet of newspaper and a jar containing a small quantity of jam. Damson is as good as any. It takes about ten minutes for the insects to organize their invasion of the decoy,



and this period must be endured in complete silence by the entire family. Then, and only then, can the picnic proper be prepared.

Should the insects see through this stratagem and make a bee-line for the richer fare it is just too bad. The picnic must go on. Wasps can be kept reasonably quiet by passive resistance and the surrender of some small viscous area of the spread, and midges can be fought off with clouds of tobacco smoke and occasional sweeps with a folded newspaper. But the flies should be ignored: they are so stupid that nothing short of total chemical warfare will discourage them. On Gallipoli our troops soon gave up the struggle against the clouds of flies that infested their mugs of tea: they drank them down and found them pleasantly sweet. There is always, you see, a brighter side.

My own arrangements do not include tea-making. My X marks a spot about a hundred yards from an excellent little café where they charge only a shilling for a pot of tea, are very liberal with hot water, and are not offended by people who consume their own sandwiches on the premises.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



HOPE STREET MOODIES

WHERE other families have a family tree, clean, neat, and symmetrical, we had a tangled undergrowth, or thicket, in which it was possible to get embarrassingly lost.

I remember attending the funeral of one of my Great-aunt Susan's aunts, a person of quite inconceivable age. The small church was crowded, and I suppose something in the voice or manner of the officiating parson must have jarred upon my intolerant childish mind, for I turned to my cousin Geoffrey and whispered into his slightly squashed-looking ear "Who is that horrible man?"

"That is our Uncle Hubert Bang," he replied in loud voice, and I was reduced to such an extremity of giggling that I had to be led from the church, and only my Great-aunt Susan's pronouncement that I was suffering from hysterical grief—an emotion she herself tended to experience at all funerals, weddings and baptisms—saved me from further public ignominy.

Then there was the new vicar who, when Great-aunt Susan announced her ancient lineage with the words "Of course I was born a Moodie," was so far misled by her gloomy countenance as to reply "Dear lady, we all have our moments of — ah — melancholia. We must try to rise above them!" I can still feel the silence that followed, bottomless, awful, and heavily laden with the fumes of the caraway seed-cake which Great-aunt Susan reserved for ceremonial occasions; and twenty years later the vicar was still referred to as "that unfortunate, facetious young man who took Mr. Bindweed's place."

Further acquaintance with the family revealed the distressing fact that it was a double affair. There were first the *Moodies*, with Great-aunt Susan as their centre-piece; but there was also an inferior tribe known as the *Hope Street Moodies*, which was presided over by a formidable old person named Great-aunt Maud Bang. The origin of the term *Hope Street Moodie* is not altogether clear; opinion differs as to whether the first Willie Moodie, who fled the family confines, actually went to live in Hope Street, or whether he coined the name to give expression to the emotion he felt at the time.

It was when Great-aunt Susan decided to have a motor-car that we became truly aware of the extent of the family and its regional organization. At first we would set off with the care-free intention of reaching a known point upon the map, but it soon became apparent that with Great-aunt Susan the shortest distance between two points was a wild zigzag and destinations were mere theoretical abstractions which were never intended to be reached.

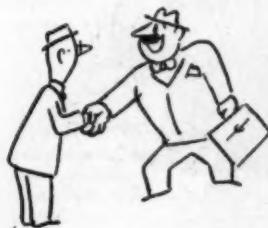
Our excursions followed a set pattern; with nerves frayed by the confusion attendant upon getting ready, we would drive off some two hours later than the advertised time with the intention of reaching, say, Nantwich in time for tea with Aunt Bitty. Progress would be steady for the first twelve miles, whilst Great-aunt Susan weighed up the odds of the house being burgled and burnt to the ground before our return. The responsibility for any such happening was then placed squarely on the shoulders of Auntie

George, who had paid for the car, and we would proceed for a further three miles with only casual comments upon the manner of our progress; then a name on a sign-post would catch Great-aunt Susan's eye, and she would shout "Stop!" The car would sway to a standstill, and a bleak voice would be heard from the back seat: "Uncle Orpington would be very unhappy if we passed so close without calling."

Auntie George would reluctantly go into reverse and we would stagger off down a by-road to find a dismayed and distant relation who would murmur "I wish I had known you were coming," and Great-aunt Susan would smile grimly, remembering the time when the Berkshire Moodies, apprized in some way of her approach, had all happened, man, woman and child, to be out for the day.

As time went on the menace grew to such an extent that Auntie George began to receive letters from all parts of the country suggesting that her mother was doing too much and should be encouraged to lead a quieter, more stationary life; but this in itself would have been quite ineffectual had not something occurred which diminished, temporarily at least, Great-aunt Susan's wanderlust.

It happened that during the summer holidays we chanced to find ourselves in North Wales, a region which was known amongst the younger members of the family as the Bang Country, since it was here that the *Hope Street Moodies* were thickest on the ground, and here that Great-aunt Maud Bang, their titular head, held her sway. We had touched the fringe of the



Bang Country the previous autumn during one of our periodical trips to Manchester via Aberystwyth, and had called upon Cousin Plinlimmon, who had flatly told us that he couldn't ask us in as he was just going to have his tea. This had brought on one of Great-aunt Susan's attacks, and she had had to be hurried home and confined to bed for a week on a light diet. Carnarvonshire was erased from the map and alternative routes had to be found. It was therefore something of a surprise when, the following summer, Great-aunt Susan announced that we would pay a call on Great-aunt Maud Bang, who lived near Holywell with her son Sylvester Bang, his wife, and their two children, Nora and Arthur Bang.

How it happened we never knew, and dared not speculate, but somehow word must have reached the Bang camp where counter-measures were immediately set in motion under the skilful and experienced eye of Great-aunt Maud.

We were to leave at what was known as 8.30 for 9.30, and it was at 10 o'clock, as my Great-aunt Susan was making her preliminary survey of the downstairs window-catches, that Aunt Clara, who was waiting coolly at the wheel of the car, sounded the alarm. Auntie George was in the kitchen packing the hamper, which contained Great-aunt Susan's elevenses. At the sound of the three short blasts on the horn we all crowded to the window and were just in time to see Cousin Plinlimmon, his two daughters, and his housekeeper, turning in at the gate.

"We just happened to be passing," Cousin Plinlimmon said, basely utilizing Great-aunt Susan's

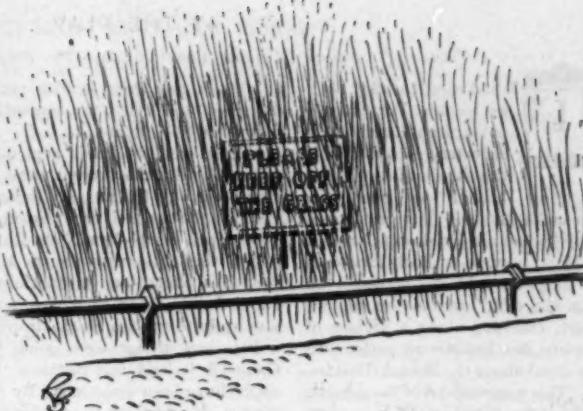
own formula and depositing some luggage in the hall. His daughters giggled, and they all pressed forward into the drawing-room, where the housekeeper ran a gloved finger along the sideboard which had not been dusted. Unaware of what was to come, Great-aunt Susan rallied magnificently in a fierce determination to instruct these backsliding Hope Street Moodies in the meaning of Moodie Hospitality. Cooking sherry was produced, and some rather dusty Christmas cake.

"It seems a pity we can't ask you to stop," she said at 10.25, "with your two delightful girls and this excellent person; but Maud would never forgive us if we arrived too late for lunch." She had scarcely finished speaking when another warning boot was heard from the car, and at 10.27 Great-aunt Maud Bang sailed in, followed by Sylvester, his wife, and Nora and Arthur. Thereafter the peace of the morning was periodically

shattered with short blasts on the motor horn, and Great-aunt Susan's house steadily filled with Hope Street Moodies.

By 12 noon the drawing-room was full and there was an overflow into the dining-room. Enthroned amidst her clan, Great-aunt Maud Bang had just produced her tatting with the remark that the rest of the day was before them. Great-aunt Susan's smile was gallant but ghastly. "Willie," she said to me, "tell Aunt Clara she can come in now. Uncle Egremont is in hospital, and there aren't any more. And Willie," she added, "you'd better go round to the stores and fetch eighteen of their small pork pies."

The cardboardy pastries with their dubious contents were her last card, but the Hope Street Moodies carried the day. They had the digestions of horses. Auntie George was the only casualty. She developed a sharp attack of heartburn.



AT THE PLAY

Tristan of Cornwall (MINACK, PORTHCUARNO)—*The Polygamist* (NEW LINDSEY)

T had rained all day; but we reached Porthcurno, not far from Land's End, in watery sunlight, with the shreds of a rainbow lingering behind us over St. Michael's Mount. That afternoon they had staged *Tristan of Cornwall* indoors: now, so an Early Briton in Wellingtons told us, it would be "on the cliff," and to the cliff we went, churning along a variety of muddy, bracken-strewn paths until we stood above the Minack Theatre.

This is carved out of the granite. Below the tiered seats is a grass stage with a permanent backing of pillars, battlements, and a throe: all most suitable for the poetic-symbolic drama. It is the sort of place that might be inhabited permanently by Merlin and a mixed lot of bards, and one would salute them on their choice. No other stage I know has for cyclorama a vast arc of sea that at night is like heaving molten metal, blue-black in the darkness, with a buoy moaning somewhere towards Land's End, and the Lizard Light to flash on a far horizon. The players, if one is well situated, can seem to rise from the wave. There is always a flight or so of desperately histrionic gulls; and, if the day has been wet, there

is what a rapturous maiden once described to me as "the romantic dampness" of granite.

Merlin and the bards kept out of the Minack's most recent piece, a crown jewel of the Cornish Drama Festival. But we had, very properly, *Tristan and Isolde*—Mrs. NORA RATCLIFFE, the authoress, prefers the French spelling—and a tactfully-handled chorus of travelled Peasants was ready to explain, at the drop of a hat, how things were going in Cornwall, Ireland, and Brittany. It might have been disastrous. By no means. It added up to an exciting theatrical night. Mrs. RATCLIFFE had told her story without the mistier dithering, and a cast of Cornish amateurs did honour to the county. Miss JEAN MARTIN, as *Isolde the Fair*, and Miss DOROTHY MEADE, as *Isolde of the White Hands*, acted with fluency and unpumped emotion. Their *Tristan* (Mr. JAMES HASWELL), if less supple, was an agreeably romantic speaker; and Mr. LAURENCE NATT, as *Mark of Cornwall*, was every inch the sort of king ready to toss his wife to the lepers. Mrs. RATCLIFFE has flattened some of her scenes by using narration instead of action, and she has a verbose Dwarf: otherwise—and allowing for the immense help given

to it by the principal actor, the theatre itself—it is a *Tristan* drama better than average.

"This is turning out even funnier than I thought," observes someone in *The Polygamist*. He is a kindly man, for the farce has always a struggle to be funny. After deliberation, I cannot really see why Mr. PAUL LINCOLN should have thought that his jest about a man who preached polygamy, but who found it trying in practice, could fill an entire evening. The best things are incidental: Mr. AUBREY DEXTER's superb piratical beard; Mr. FRANK HENDERSON's "mental bone-setter" who, by muddling the class-room numbers at night school, became a student of psychology; and Mr. LESLIE YEO's battle with sleep on a small sofa: a reminder of the way in which Mr. Ralph Lynn tied himself into knots under a washstand—how many years ago?

Recommended

Waters of the Moon (Haymarket) as a likeable serious comedy. *The Love of Four Colonels* (Wyndham's) for originality, and *Man and Superman* (Princes) for wit.

J. C. TREWIN



Full House

[*The Polygamist*]

Madge Hassleton—MISS BETTY ENGLAND; Leonora Dawson—MISS GENINE GRAHAM; Keith Hassleton—MR. LESLIE YEO; Charles Widdrop—MR. AUBREY DEXTER; Doris Widdrop—MISS CAROL TENNANT; Henry Proctor—MR. FRANK HENDERSON

IN SEARCH OF PURE FORM

SCULPTORS in these days are adventurous folk: as adventurous as the "abstract" painters (whose example they have followed). Like the painter, the abstract sculptor tries to separate some essential beauty in his art from matter which does not belong to it.

This becomes an intelligible aim if you think of a geologist or chemist separating a precious metal from various alloys: or the philosopher who deals in general ideas, separated from the personalities and details that delight the novelist. They "abstract" (to make it a verb) something from the mass of substances and facts. In the same way, form being the sculptor's business, it is possible to contend that abstract or "pure" form is separable from the representation of a shapely arm or leg.

How does one think of sculptural form apart from the human figure or some other animal organism such as a lion or a horse? The sculpture of abstract mind will refer us to the purity of sphere, cone, cube and cylinder—those traditional properties of the art class room are, so to speak, general ideas in three dimensions; or perhaps to a pebble on the shore, with such beauty as comes of being hollowed and polished by the action of time and tide, an example, one might say, of the abstract art of nature; or even to space considered as a kind of invisible sculpture—a hollow sphere defined by two intersecting circles gives an example. You follow the train of thought; but then two questions arise; why has no one pursued it before, for until this century no sculptor has, and what, if any, is the gain to art?

The sculptors of the past (to answer the first question) had good reasons for preferring to represent living things and, especially, human beings. As the most complex of forms, the human figure seemed to offer every problem that a sculptor might tackle with advantage. In this he could still be abstract enough. The rhythm in the movement of the riders on the Parthenon

frieze is certainly beautiful in itself. Considered simply as structures, the great figures "Night" and "Day" by Michelangelo are superb. Yet humanity was not just a make-weight in these and other historic masterpieces. Life and ideas were inherent in the form and there would be no benefit in separating them (it would, in fact, be impossible), because one element explains the other. The calm of a Buddha flows from head to toe. Even in Aztec sculpture, geometrical as it is, there is intense life. A carved Aztec snake is the very spirit of venom and sinuous power. If it were more "lifelike" in a merely imitative sense, it would be less alive. On the other hand, reduce it to spirals merely and the vigour of it would be gone.

What a loss "pure" form suffers by throwing overboard all this complexity and richness of suggestion is obvious enough. In estimating the possible gain, one must judge by results. For instance, in the open-air exhibition of sculpture in Battersea Park, to show us what geometry can inspire there is M. Antoine Pevsner's "Column of Victory capable of development." One can forget the title, for it is not a column, has no obvious connection with Victory and being complete in itself is incapable of development rather than otherwise. It is only to be appreciated as a shape, an affair of



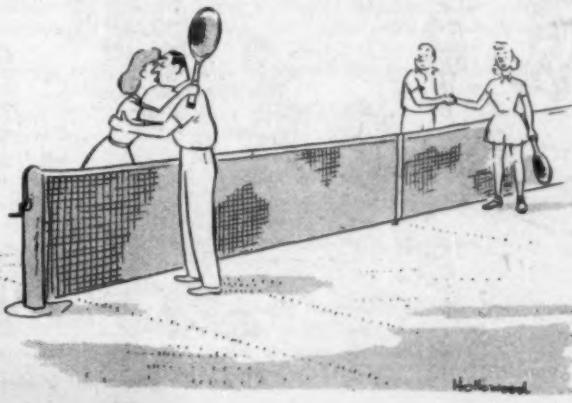
planes, angles and interstices between intersections: and from this point of view has something of interest to offer the eye. It is possible to admire the ingenious construction of its meeting diagonals. Yet, if anything, it is too easy to understand. One becomes aware how limited is the repertoire of form based on geometrical figures alone. The visitor who does not find it emotionally moving may well be excused.

Elementary forms (like the pebble) set the artist a more elaborate problem. To copy them exactly would mean nothing, would not, indeed, be recognizable as man's handiwork (which geometry, at least, suggests). It is necessary therefore to make it suggest some more definite object, and the result is the compromise of the "semi-abstract."

In the Battersea Exhibition the difficulty of the compromise is exemplified in Mr. Henry Moore's "Standing Figure." It would be better perhaps if it were more abstract—or less; as it is, one cannot help regarding it as a human anatomy and being disappointed because it is not. There is on that account a lack of the dignity which Mr. Moore has so well given to more "humanist" works.

"Pure form" is an interesting thought—but the old humanism was more fruitful.

WILLIAM GAUNT



THIS HAPPY BREED OF VOTERS

Written after a gratified reading of Mr. Gwyn Thomas's "The World Cannot Hear You"

WHEN I said I was going to try something in the style of Gwyn Thomas flakes of doubt cascaded from the ceiling of the bar wherein I had chosen to let these tidings fall. Even Glumro Jerkin, well known as a torpid element seldom to be shifted by anything more abstract than a paving stone, did his best to choke me off.

"Other voters have had the idea of being linguacious in the manner of this element" said Glumro "Forget it, boy. You can't do it"

"I can do the leaving out the stops at the end of quotes" I said.

"That isn't all" said Glumro "There are other compartments in the string of first-class carriages hauled across the gasping book world by Thomas. This voter has a literary exuberance calculated to arouse the envy of a high pressure tap fitted with Roget's Thesaurus and no washer. The dragonflies of his metaphor flash the soles of their feet. All the way down the main road of his fancy the lamp posts are inset with jewels of the first water"

I agreed with Glumro that Thomas was the most sportive element to explode between the feet of readers at the Library and Institute since Flann O'Brien. This O'Brien was an Irish voter who was delivered of an

exhilarating seizure by the name of *At Swim Two Birds* in the year 1939, a few months before the occurrence that blocked up all exits on this disgruntled planet, since when other voters have heard nothing of him. I have sometimes thought of writing to Messrs. Longmans, Green and Co., the London elements whose watchful consciences prompted them to put his sprightly and harmonious work within the reach of so many approving voters, to ask what has become of him and when a renewed paroxysm may be hoped for.

"Besides" said Glumro "it will avail you nothing to write in the manner of Thomas. Many voters have neglected to read his works"

"I was afflicted with a similar ignorance till yesterday" I said "But now I am inspired. The fires of enlightenment have calcified my diaphragm"

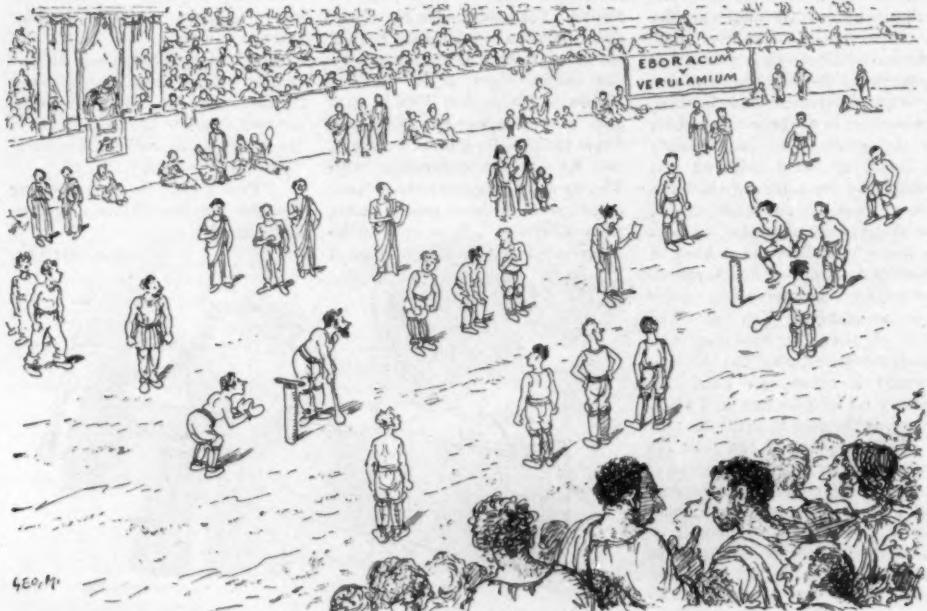
"Is that good?"

"I don't know but just listen to it"

Algethri Jones was already convinced. "The voters don't have to have read him" he said "Give them a treat, boy. Let them keelhaul their bewilderment in your wake"

"Thank you, Algethri" I said "You are the one alkaline spot among these acid elements"

Algethri looked gratified. He was a small underslung



"What this game wants is lions!"

voter smelling of chip-fat and on all fours he would have resembled a dachshund, or half a gondola on stilts. "Thomas deserves the best of everything" he said "and if anything you do can increase the size of the crowd round this rollicking element I say more power to the elbow whose flexure enables you to produce it."

"All this is in a fair way to send unstable elements off the hinge" said Callimachus Stubbs.

"All the better"

"That is an irresponsible attitude to take" said Callimachus disapprovingly "Anyone might think that on Wednesdays you had to pay your conscience time and a half."

All this time Glumro had been brooding in his corner like one of the more Zoroastrian cockroaches. He stared at some bottles with the air of an executioner reading a prospectus for the Blarney Stone.

"Parody" he said at last "is a device expressly designed under the inequalities of the present social system for the confusion and disconcerting of the voters"

"This element has changed his tack" said Algethri.

"No" said Callimachus "He has stuck an economy label on the old one and is using it again. But all the same there is reason in what he says. The proles will not take kindly to anything in the nature of an imitation of Thomas"

"All I want them to do" I said "is to recognize in him the springs of my delight. When I think of all the years I might have been purifying the space between my ears by bathing in the luebrations of this voter, my pineal eye flashes like the searchlight on the tower of the County Mental. I wish to noise him abroad. I have a mind to sing"

"Have a care, boy" said Glumro, pointing to the notice behind the bar "These premises are not licensed for same"

"Then we must move"

We went and squandered oceans of velvet song on the disconsolate flat face of the employment exchange, and all in all you would have been hard put to it to find a more tuneful set of voters in the fringe. Our last chord lay back in the petrol-coloured air and stretched chiming amiably right down to the collecting-box end of the gold bar of heaven.

"There, boy" said Glumro "Doesn't that bite the seat right out of the trousers of calamity?"

"Maybe" I said "But I'm still going to do it"

"This element is unteachable" said Glumro. He gathered the others round him like a pall and went off leaving me to work my seam. But I have had to leave out much Rabelaisian jollification out of deference to the more high-born voters. RICHARD MALLETT

"Regal 7.30 p.m. Positively Here comes the picture that will move you away from your seat."
Add. in Accra "Daily Graphic"

A real stinker?



WILLOW-LEAF PATTERN

FALLING on my picnic plate
a single willow-leaf lay,
delicate
across the cucumber sandwich, the chicken-leg,
and the glazed-utility-china new-shelled egg.

Delicate? No. Narrow, but strong and shapely as a
musician's finger?
No. Serrated, graceful and dangerous as a dagger.
Instead of brushing it away I picked it up:
for the first time in my life
I really looked at a willow-leaf.

Short as life is, eternity can also sometimes be brief.

The leaf's veining
drawn with the quality of line of hoar-frost
mimicked the skeining,
current-pulled, wind-plucked ripples of the water
under the bank; but ripples stilled as those are never
stilled.
Unique. Like to, but different from all wave-patterns
in the universe
and, therefore, in eternity:

like to, but different from the capillaries,
the motor-nerves of this hand with which I write,
like to the rhythms of beauty stroked by the wind's
hand in the grass:
like to the rhythms pulsing in all atoms:
like to light,
heat, sound:
like to, but different from them all: unique,
dividing with the dagger-knife
eternity—which contains all similarities—
from being, which is life. R. C. SCRIVEN

BOOKING OFFICE

Cities and Mountains

THE idea of the city as something more than the sum of its architectural and human components; as the emanation or essence of these, which it yet transcends and conditions; as a sentient organism subject to the flux of growth and decay, with its own benign or sinister personality, its own soul—this idea has had a large and increasing place in modern literature. It is implicit in Balzac and Dickens. It has informed much poetry, from Baudelaire to Eliot. It has even, by Jules Romains, been made the basis of a philosophy. Of those who take cities for their specific theme there are few nowadays, apart from mere guide-book-makers and antiquaries, whose aim is not to give it expression.

That has confessedly been the aim, and in satisfying measure it has been the accomplishment, of Mr. Christopher Kininmonth in writing of Rome. He has, he tells us, "kept the memory of El Greco's portrait of Toledo"—and perhaps also the memory of Maurice Barrès—"as a model and an ambitious standard." Should this statement arouse apprehensions of too strenuous an effort at fine writing, or of too deliberate a simplification, they will soon be dispelled. Mr. Kininmonth is not altogether guiltless of preciosities,

but he is saved from an excess of artifice by the spontaneity of his response to the details of the living scene. His title, *Rome Alive*, is justified.

He has known the city at all seasons and has made it his business to know it under every aspect. Seeking character in the byways he is without the snobbery that would shun what fame has made familiar. He likes to eat with honest poverty and drink among the dubious, but it pleases him that so many of the great palaces should have kept at least a remnant of their ancient state. He delights in the antitheses of unity and variety, of continuity and change, and, as many a description bears witness, is no mean master of chiaroscuro. A devotee of St. Peter and Michelangelo, he has little reverence for the achievement of the Caesars—*l'antique orgueil qui menaçait les cieux*—but he can appreciate the uses of its ruins. "There are many old stones here," a young mechanic told him under the arches of the Colosseum, "but the lizards living among them know how to enjoy themselves!"

Mr. Rupert Croft-Cooke and Mr. Noël Barber, packing thirty cities into less space than Mr. Kininmonth has devoted to one, have of necessity gone less deep into their subject. Their *Cities* is a "book of talk," conceived over a Paris café table, where they discovered that between them they had visited nearly every major city of the earth. So Mr. Croft-Cooke undertook the portrait of this one, Mr. Barber of that, and the pooled collection, displayed in alphabetical order, ranges from Barcelona, with Batavia as the next stop, to Venice by way of Tananarive, and from China as near as need be to Peru. Some of these miniatures are impressionistic, some anecdotal; all are reminiscent and not a few nostalgic, for the writers are remembering their youth, or at any rate the days before a blight had settled on the world. In a diffusion of brightness it is difficult to distinguish the high lights, but perhaps Mr. Croft-Cooke at Buenos Aires and Marseilles and Goa has evoked most effectively the spirit of place.

From the cities to the mountains is, at this time of year, a natural transition. To those who would make it Mr. J. Hubert Walker and Mr. C. Douglas Milner may be recommended not only as guides but as philosophers and friends. Both the *Walking in the Alps* of the one and *The Dolomites* of the other abound in useful information attractively presented. Mr. Walker, who addresses himself not only to his generic namesake but to "the climber of moderate attainment," is the more severely practical. His enthusiasm for "the splendour of the hills" is everywhere apparent, but his purpose has been to chart with exactitude those groups of the Central and Eastern Alps which are here his concern. Mr. Milner, in far fewer pages, has permitted himself larger excursions into history and the picturesque. Either volume, but particularly Mr. Milner's with its hundred and fifty magnificent plates, makes a desirable photographic picture-book, even for stay-at-homes. So do both *Rome Alive* and *Cities*.

FRANCIS BICKLEY

"It's chaps like you who perpetuate this
no-walking-under-ladders superstition . . ."



Hyde Park Horrors

Professor Nikolaus Pevsner's *High Victorian Design* is a learned discussion of the material for the history of taste which is provided by the exhibits at the Great Exhibition. After looking at the numerous illustrations it is impossible to continue regarding the period as amusing or to feel a nostalgic admiration for it. The exuberant ugliness, the mixture of inaccurately imitated styles, the bulging curves, the decoration sprawling like fungus over every surface are as revolting as people used to say that they were. Professor Pevsner is not taken in by the recent revival; but he is more interested in discovering why things went wrong than in attacking them. His entertaining little book does succeed in explaining without pardoning. The exhibits included a "cricket catapults, for propelling the ball in the absence of a first-rate bowler," an omnibus designed to avoid the sight of any one passenger by any other, and an "Ottoman Coal Sarcophagus." Unfortunately, the majority were not even funny.

R. G. G. P.

The Right to Say It

Private Heath, in Mr. Jeb Stuart's fine novel *The Objector*, is presented so completely in the round from his first appearance on page one that he must either have been drawn from a living character well-known to the author or else have undergone protracted gestation in the author's head. He is a simple-minded young man who becomes a conscientious objector because he disapproves of killing, but who serves willingly in the army as a medical orderly and is finally killed in battle. As is traditional in stories about American army life, the officers and N.C.O.s are shown as foul-mouthed and stupid; indeed, there is more obscene language in the book than there is any call for. But to miss the book on that account, or from any preconceived bias about non-combatancy (in which question one is not asked to take sides), would be to miss as moving and as beautifully-written a war-novel as any since "A Farewell to Arms."

B. A. Y.

Horn of Plenty

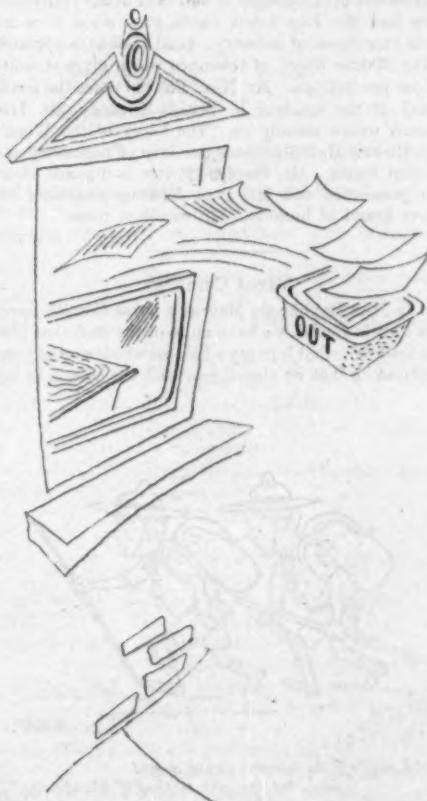
No one who read "Bricks and Flowers" will be able to resist *Walk With Me*, which is full of the diverting things which (one suspects) Mrs. Katherine Everett did her best to fit into her autobiography but failed because that Anglo-Irish cornucopia was brimful already. Here they come tumbling out in characteristic profusion: racy tales of the Ascendancy's Irish hangers-on and of English counterparts kept a little less like pets or beasts of burden but not so nimble at getting a bit of their own back; of the squirearchy holding themselves aloof from that rising oligarchy the Dublin surgeons; and of such rebels against all convention as the writer's mother-in-law, Aurelia, who successfully addressed a temperance meeting primed with strong cider. In this world of the Irish R.M. only one tale seems to misfire:

and that is "Solitude," in which a native-born farmer's son, who takes to a Wordsworthian type of mysticism, creates a favourable impression on the bishop.

H. P. E.

Traveller

The impulse which modern idiom expresses as a wish to "go places," or—even more prosaically—as "having ants in the pants," has led Mr. Willard Price into more than seventy countries, ranging literally between Dr. Johnson's two extremes, and he has gathered together a number of his varied adventures under the title *I Cannot Rest from Travel*. As he remarks in one of his most discerning chapters, there is the right kind and the wrong kind of traveller. Mr. Price is the right kind. Whether he is interviewing Mr. Gandhi or a Jivaro head-hunter, or escaping from a tiger or a runaway elephant, or exploring the Rio das Mortes country or the Appalachian Mountains, he has the qualities of courage, shrewd observation, humour, even



when the joke is on himself, and, above all, insatiable interest in and curiosity about men and things, especially men. "The popular notion," says Mr. Price, "that improved communication and closer association make us all better friends is not necessarily true." And in these days, when one can hop from Rome to Rio in a few hours' flying time, the intending traveller might do worse than pick up a few useful pointers from Mr. Price's excellent chapter called "Adventures in Understanding."

C. F. S.

Agreeable Miscellany

The catchpenny, Festival-market, over-illustrated aspect of *This Britain* does not suggest the high quality of the text by twelve lively pens. Mr. Michael Lewis opens on the theme of Moat and Fortress. Mr. L. A. G. Strong selects aspects of our landscape and national character. Mr. Osbert Lancaster's thesis is that the English scene, not the city only but the countryside, is an elaborate work of art. The Earl of Portsmouth recalls the great stock breeders of the past. Mr. Bernard Hollowood brings insight to his study of our craftsmanship and Mr. Roy Lewis distils good sense from his wide experience of industry. Lord Hailsham applauds "The Middle Way" of tolerance which gives stability to our institutions. Mr. Nigel Balchin notes the fertile touch of the amateur in British Science. Mr. Ivor Brown writes warmly on "The Glory of the Word." Mr. Glenvil Hall illustrates our love of pageantry and ancient forms. Mr. Stephen Potter is flippant about our gamesmen and Mr. Paul Jennings examines our queer brand of humour. An excellent team.

J. F. T.

Mixed Company

In Miss Daphne du Maurier's latest Cornish novel, *My Cousin Rachel*, we have more of the stuff that films are made of—that is to say a heroine who is so tricky and captivating that we almost join with the hero in loving,



"Living off the country seemed a good idea, but one gets so tired of blackberries."

detesting and fearing her. He (like his uncle before him) begins by knowing and caring nothing about women, but slides into infatuation and suspicion, equally mixed. Did she poison his uncle? He gives her the family jewels, and wonders if she is trying to poison him. It would not be fair to give away more of the plot, which has a startling finish. Of course, the book is readable and, of course, the characters (though they would make exhausting company) are clearly and heavily defined.

B. E. B.

"Little Lions"

Cats, after some measure of eclipse, are again in fashion; Miss Jenny Laird's *James and Macarthur* may not increase their fame, but her "little lions" have many true traits and are so nicely observed, behind the veil of fantasy she spreads over them, that everyone who knows cats must approve. The brother heroes, apparently a neuter and a lusty tom, lead a comfortable life in their suburban home with their servants Thompson and Mrs. The first part of the book, with their conviction that the house is theirs and that the Thompsons must obey them, fits in well with recognized cat behaviour; at the end a cats' council sits to decide whether all this still belongs to them or to Red Roger who has moved in while they were away. It is not a book for children, and here the older reader may begin to feel that the fantasy has become a little too robust.

B. E. S.

Books Reviewed Above

Rome Alive. Christopher Kininmonth. (John Lehmann, 18/-)

Cities. Rupert Croft-Cooke and Noël Barber. (Allan Wingate, 18/-)

Walking in the Alps. J. Hubert Walker. (Oliver and Boyd, 25/-)

The Dolomites. C. Douglas Milner. (Robert Hale, 25/-)

High Victorian Design. Nikolaus Pevsner. (Architectural Press, 12/6)

The Objector. Jeb Stuart. (John Lehmann, 10/6)

Walk With Me. Katherine Everett. (Constable, 12/6)

I Cannot Rest from Travel. Willard Price. (Heinemann, 21/-)

This Britain: Tradition and Achievement. Edited by Newton Branch. (Macdonald, 12/6)

My Cousin Rachel. Daphne du Maurier. (Gollancz, 12/6)

James and Macarthur. Jenny Laird. (Secker and Warburg, 10/6)

Other Recommended Books

We of Nagasaki. Takashi Nagai. (Gollancz, 10/6) Eight survivors of the bomb tell their grim stories. The eye-witness reporting is well below the standard of Hersey's "Hiroshima" in drama and detail, but its mood of devastating bewilderment and hopelessness is remarkably impressive. Dr. Nagai, who edited the eight contributions, has since died of radiation sickness.

Night Man. Allan Ullman and Lucille Fletcher. (Gollancz, 9/6) Despite a twelve-chapter flash-back, a masterpiece of suspense. From the same stable as *Sorry, Wrong Number*, and nearly up to that standard.

Girls and Stations. Terence Greenidge. (Fortune Press, 7/6) Admirably unusual collection of verses in which the beauties of railways are hymned side-by-side with the more conventional beauties of the female sex. Foreword by John Betjeman.

LUNCH ON THE BEACH

YOU know those acts in military tournaments where teams have to sling a gun across a ravine or get a man down a cliff, and after what seems a frantic little lifetime of action and tension the referee announces "Fifty-seven and three-fifths seconds"? . . . Well, there's a comparable event in private life for which we'd like to enter a team.

"Switch on the small plate at FULL, half fill the kettle, no, no sandwiches, five eggs and that small tin of bully-beef, the bit of butter under the wire cover, yes, all the round cake, apples and tomatoes in the green basket, not too much milk, it's only wasted, put a bit of grease-proof round the cork, Susan, biscuits if you like, no I don't think the gorgonzola, better the old mousetrap, you won't get five tomatoes in the tea-pot, roll the bottle in the thickest towel, Rosie, those eggs are done, under the cold tap, yes, I'd better wear my sunglasses, don't let's leave the cooker on for eight hours this time, two loaves and four pints, Mrs. Batterbury, mind your shorts, Tom, with that kettle, who's got Coco's lead?"

Our time? Eight and a half minutes, I make it, from Rosie bounding in and shouting "Lunch on the beach. The whole family, with the Browns and the Hatherleys. Lifts for all if we look slippy. Step on it!"

* * * * *

Perhaps I should add two footnotes:-

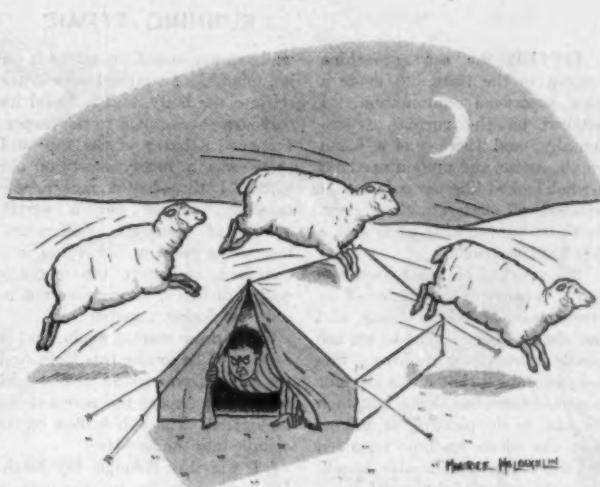
(a) *Half fill the kettle.* This is the electric kettle. For those who have not tried to boil an egg by electricity, the method can be explained by those who have.

(b) *Mind your shorts.* This is the old tin kettle for the picnic fire, carried full of water at knee-level, and permanently black.

2 2

Stop, Sheaf!

"Cous. G. Arrowsmith asked if something could be done to arrest flying paper on market days. It was a disgrace to the town."—"Boston Guardian"



FESTIVALIA

Sculpture Exhibition

"YOU'll find some queer stuff here,"
The attendant whispered in my ear.
"For instance, look at *her*;
A lump of grey, with slits for mouth
and eye;
No hair, no nose
That *I* can see," he said
(And I wished him dead).

She stood apart, quite tall,
Away from the flat grey wall.
That finely chiselled mark
That was her mouth
Trembled with youth
That knew of pain too soon:
And the fearsome dawning
Of knowledge stole
From the simple hole
Of her intelligent eye,
And spread its ray,
Illumining her still, small face
And lighting up the place
Where we stood, sharing one mood.

"Now, take a look at these old
blocks;
And be ready for a few bad shocks!
And yet," he said, "this Mr. Moore's
a proper toff—
Knows what he wants, and gets it;
I'll have it here, and so—to show
it off."

And picks it up himself, and
sets it.
Just where it ought to go."

I measure them with geometric
eyes,
The mother and the naked babe
that lies
Hard as a hammered and unbroken
nut.
All rules and regulations here are
put to rout.
Here the supreme distortion,
The highest point of sensitive
proportion.
The gleaming, smooth round stone
No longer solid,
But flowing, fluid.
All crudity has gone,
And vast refinement fills the
imagined veins,
Springs in the swelling breast,
Runs in the tender throat.
The warm limbs lie all slack
And careless—as a woman's will
When her sweet child at last
Her pains has loosed from the
rack.
So she now takes her fill
Of her so brief, brief motherhood;
While he, her son, her king,
Climbs on her body regally—
Makes her his safe plaything.

RUNNING REPAIR

I LIFTED the sewing-machine down to the floor and made a quick superficial examination. I switched on the current experimentally, and there was a harsh grinding noise, and a pin jumped out of what looked like the exhaust. I switched off and, standing clear, went over the working parts with a long knitting-needle.

My wife had said that there was heavy consumption of thread in second gear, or button-holing, and that she had been forced to use the treadle when doing quilting. She had maintained that it ran all right on nightdresses and shirts, but when she had to do pleating or pillow-cases the whole machine trembled and there was considerable knocking in the region of the transformer. Further, when fine stitching the body seemed to sway from side to side, the needle became hot to the touch, and she had frequently to reinforce the base with a cushion.

I lifted the engine out and stripped the needle-box. I found a match-stick, two more pins, and a silver threepenny-piece. This last I put away in my trouser pocket. I turned the engine over and put it back. I then tried it on the treadle, and it spat at me sharply, and the bobbin began to coil thread on itself the wrong way round, the

while slowly spiralling upwards on its spindle. I squirted typewriter oil into the body, and it found its way straight through to the carpet. I opened a hatch in the top, and there was a musty smell of old cloth. I threaded a new needle carefully, played out a length of thread into the differential, inserted a piece of old apron into the feed, and gave the motor a couple of turns, taking care not to sew my fingers together.

The noise started again, and it seemed to be louder this time, and to come from where one might reasonably expect the rear axle to be located. The bobbin flew off its spindle into the fireplace.

I whistled through my teeth. It could only be (a) too rich a mixture—too much cotton escaping through a cracked needlehead; or (b) the cotton itself had become knotted somewhere between the cloth intake and the accelerator. There was, however, no sign of a cloud of black smoke, nor had the owner said anything about explosions.

I next examined the make-and-break. The break appeared to be working satisfactorily. But I tested this carefully, using two thicknesses of thread, and both broke easily; I found traces of jam in the thread

induction lead, and I decided that this would mean a very heavy needle leak in artificial light.

I carried the machine back to the table, clamped it down securely, filled the needle with thread, and switched on once more. There was no actual grinding this time, but a high-pitched moaning and intermittent banging instead. I changed the needle, giving it a thinner thread, and put the motor into reverse. The bobbin flew off again, this time towards the window. Aha! I said—too much needle chasing too little cotton.

I went through to where the owner was sewing. I explained that if she wanted the job done thoroughly the machine would have to be taken off heavy work—even laid up. I said if I were she I shouldn't run up tablecloths or curtains yet awhile, and that I should get a second opinion—perhaps the shop where the machine was bought . . .

My wife said it was an old model anyhow, and she had been considering scrapping it, and did I think we could run to . . .

I said well, maybe I had been rather too cursory in my examination. I went back to the machine, lifted it down, and began to take it to pieces.



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A SHORT HISTORY OF WRITING



No. 6. The Age of Steel

The Industrial Revolution ushered in a spate of inventions, in many of which steel played a major part. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that steel was pressed into the service of writing.

Steel pens had been used for writing purposes in the eighteenth century, but they failed to provide the flexibility and ink retention essential until a "split nib" was perfected round about 1850. With but minor modifications this type of steel nib can still be found.

Birmingham was the centre for the steel pen industry, as Reading, in Berkshire, where Biro is manufactured, is now recognised the world over as the "home" of ballpoint pens.

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And of course, designs like that are dateless—they are rare too. The skill and brains of men can build a car, but you need that special something—that touch of genius—to get a Javelin, a family saloon with greyhound's grace.

This car is a waste of money if you don't care what a car does. There's such a lot built into it that doesn't really show until you have it in your hands.

Top speed, electrically timed, 80 m.p.h. Acceleration 0-60 m.p.h. in 22.4 seconds. ("The Autocar" Road Test, 1951). Horizontally opposed flat-four 50 B.P.H. Engine. Javelin saloon £635, plus purchase tax. Javelin saloon de luxe £735, plus purchase tax.

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"Brakes? Oh, they're all right. Never give any trouble."

Are you *sure* they're all right? It's difficult to judge. As the linings wear so gradually, a driver may notice nothing—he doesn't realize he's pushing the pedal harder. The time might come *today* when you have to stop in a hurry—and can't.

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Here's a useful reminder of two routine jobs: **Test your brakes when you change your oil—every 2,000-3,000 miles.**

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HOW TO GET A BONUS IN M.P.T.



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Never brake suddenly if you can avoid it. Sudden braking tears rubber off your tyres—steals miles of wear. Sudden starts and jerky acceleration are just as bad. Smooth driving means more M.P.T.—Miles-Per-Tyre—and more Miles-Per-Gallon.

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be coaxed out again until she has fully recuperated. Sensible Elsie! An Exide type, we like to think. A really reliable little tortoise.

* * *

On the South Bank Site Chloride, Exide & Exide-Ironclad batteries have been chosen to power the emergency lighting & crowd counting systems and to provide the subject of many exhibits.

P.18

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